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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/630,470	07/29/2003	Kazuhiro Matsuyama	59651 (49321)	9184
21874	7590	06/27/2005	EXAMINER	
EDWARDS & ANGELL, LLP P.O. BOX 55874 BOSTON, MA 02205			NGUYEN, ANTHONY H	
		ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER
				2854
DATE MAILED: 06/27/2005				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/630,470	MATSUYAMA ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Anthony H. Nguyen	2854

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 13 June 2005.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-9 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-9 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 7/29/03 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All
 - b) Some *
 - c) None of:
 - 1) Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - 2) Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - 3) Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on June 13, 2005 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Sato (US 2002/0044810) in view of Shiraishi (US 6,445,891).

With respect to claims 1, 4-7 and 9, Sato teaches an image forming apparatus 1 having a sheet eject mechanism 200, 202 which includes a receiving tray 41 (Sato, Figs. 1, 2 and 8). Sato does not teach the sheet eject mechanism which moves between an initial position and a sorting position and the control device which regulating a delay time required for the sheet mechanism moving from the initial position to the sorting position or other position. Shiraishi teaches a control device (CPU) 31 which regulates a delay time for the sheet eject mechanism

which moves from a position to other position via the initial sensor 26, the timing sensors 25, 38 and an offset motor 37. In view of the teaching of Shiraishi, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the image forming apparatus of Sato by providing the sheet ejection mechanism and the control device as taught Shiraishi to improve the efficiency of feeding a print medium to a stacker. With respect to claims 2 and 6, Shiraishi teaches the use of the control device 31 which compares the transport interval with a preset or predetermined time to set a delay time (Shiraishi, Fig.4 and col.3, the second and third paragraphs). With respect to claims 3,4,7 and 8, the use of a control device to determine the size of a sheet and calculate the transport interval with a reference delay time is conventional as exemplified by Shiraishi. Note also that Shiraishi teaches a control device that detects an error in the timing of offset stacker (Shiraishi, the abstract).

Response to Arguments

Applicants' arguments filed on May 12, 2005 and June 13, 2005 have been fully considered but they are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

The patents to Kato et al., Mimura et al. and muraoka are cited to show other structures having obvious similarities to the claimed structure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Anthony Nguyen whose telephone number is (571) 272-2169. The examiner can normally be reached daily from 9 AM to 5PM. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Andrew Hirshfeld, can be reached on (571) 272-2168.

The fax phone number for this Group is (703) 872-9306.

Anthony Nguyen
Anthony Nguyen
6/24/05
Patent Examiner
Technology Center 2800